

- Creating a new living space for Bill at the Zoo and possibly bringing a chimp from another Zoo to keep him company for the remainder of his life.

The AZA's chimp specialists say that they will not support moving Bill to a different facility until a full medical evaluation has been completed. To relocate Bill would require multiple anesthetizations for health assessment and transfer, which, at his advanced age, is not without significant risk to Bill's life.

Zoo staff are working to set up a physical examination of Bill to determine if his health status is stable enough to handle all the procedures required of such a move. Bill's primary zookeeper and most trusted companion, Jan Roletto, is using a training method called "operant conditioning" in the hopes that some of the tests can be performed without anesthesia. However, at least one full anesthetization will be necessary.

Many local residents don't want to see Bill leave the Zoo. What we need to consider is what is best for Bill, whether that means Bill remains a Humboldt County resident or finds a new home. One thing is certain – the Sequoia Park Zoo will continue to provide Bill with the best possible care, now and into the future.

For More Information about Bill...

As always, if you have questions about the Zoo, the Zoo residents, or anything you see here, please ask a staff member! We are always happy to speak with visitors about what is happening at the Zoo.

The mission of the Sequoia Park Zoo is to inspire wonder, understanding and respect for the natural world by providing fun, rewarding, educational experiences that encourage meaningful connections between animals, humans and our environment.

"Bill" the Chimp Past, Present & Future



Sequoia Park Zoo

THE SEQUOIA PARK ZOO HAS BEEN BILL'S HOME FOR 48 YEARS. AT 59, BILL IS ONE OF THE OLDEST CHIMPS IN CAPTIVITY. HE ENJOYS PAINTING, INTERACTING WITH HIS HANDLERS, AND WATCHING THE MANY PEOPLE WHO REGULARLY VISIT THE SEQUOIA PARK ZOO.

Bill's History

Bill was rescued by the Sequoia Park Zoo from a traveling circus when he was 10-years old – just about the age when performing chimps are no longer manageable due to maturity and strength. Born in 1946, Bill was raised by humans from an early age. In 1966 Bill was introduced to “Ziggy”, another hand-raised male chimp.

Unfortunately Bill and Ziggy didn't “hit it off” – Bill attempted to bite Ziggy's finger off during their initial introduction, so the Zoo staff built a double fenced divider to enable the pair to see each other, but preventing physical contact. During their 30-year relationship Bill and Ziggy never attempted any type of social interaction. Rather, they showed more of a competitive relationship, manifested by male dominance displays toward each other and “one-upmanship” toward keepers during feedings and keeper socializing times.



Bill's Daily Routine

Bill has close physical contact with keepers every day of the year - during feedings, grooming sessions, exhibit servicing and enrichment activities - at a minimum of five times per day. While Bill is less active now than in the past - spending much of his day resting, watching people and interacting with various enrichment activities – he still enjoys painting several times a month, and has even had his art featured on the David Letterman Show. There is a TV set and a stereo system in his heated bedroom area, and Bill shows mild and occasionally strong interest in certain television images.

The best time to see Bill is during his lunchtime feeding at around noon daily. Bill thrives on interaction with people, eating most of his meals outside if there are visitors, and watching people enter and exit the zoo. He still recognizes people from his distant past – are you one of Bill's special friends?

Chimp Facts

- ❖ Chimps learn the complex skills of chimpanzee social structure as an infant and youth, observing the interactions of other chimps.
- ❖ Chimpanzees in the wild rarely live longer than 40 years. Captive chimps can live more than 60 years.
- ❖ Chimpanzees are one of four types of “great ape.” The great apes are: chimpanzees, bonobos, gorillas, and orangutans.
- ❖ Humans and chimpanzees share 95 to 98 percent of the same DNA. Biologically, chimpanzees are more closely related to humans than they are to gorillas.
- ❖ Chimpanzees and other species, including some types of birds, make and use tools. For a long time, scientists thought human beings were the only ones who made tools.
- ❖ Chimpanzees communicate much like humans do -- by kissing, embracing, patting on the back, touching hands, and tickling.
- ❖ Chimpanzees laugh when they play.
- ❖ A full-grown chimpanzee has five or six times the strength of a human being.
- ❖ There are probably fewer than 150,000 chimpanzees remaining in the wild.

Source: The Jane Goodall Institute for Wildlife Research, Education & Conservation.

**Proceeds from sales of
Bill's artwork go
toward supporting
chimpanzee
conservation work in
the wild.**

Bill's Future

At 59 years old Bill is what you would consider very aged for a chimp. The Sequoia Park Zoo is considering several options that will allow Bill to live out the remainder of his life in the peace and comfort he so richly deserves. Zoo staff are working with the Chimpanzee Species Survival Plan's chimp specialists to identify the situation that best meets Bill's physical, mental and emotional needs.

Some of the options under consideration include:

- Relocating Bill to an AZA accredited facility with an adequately sized living space and compatible chimpanzee companion.